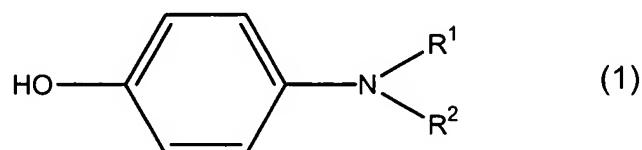


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

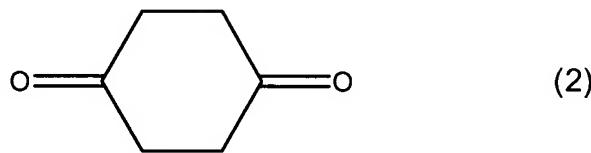
1. (Currently amended) A method of producing an aminophenol compound represented by the formula (1)



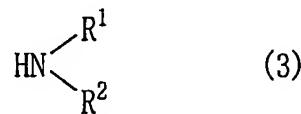
(wherein R¹ and R², taken together with the adjacent nitrogen atom, form a 5- or 6-membered heterocycle with or without other intervening heteroatoms; the heterocycle may be substituted by 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of a hydroxyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted lower alkyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted aryl group, a substituted or unsubstituted aryloxy group, a substituted or unsubstituted heterocyclic group and a substituted or unsubstituted heterocyclic group-substituted oxy group; and the hydroxyl group in the formula (1) is substituted on the 2- or 4-position to the amino group on the phenyl ring); heterocyclic group selected from the group consisting of a piperidinyl and a piperazinyl group and the heterocyclic group may be substituted by 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of a hydroxyl group; a lower alkyl group which may have 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a hydroxyl group, and an aryl group; an aryl group which may have 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of a lower alkyl group which may have 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom and a hydroxyl group, a lower alkoxy group which may have 1 to 3

substituents selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom and a hydroxyl group, and halogen atoms; and an aryloxy group which may have 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of a lower alkyl group which may have 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom and a hydroxyl group, a lower alkoxy group which may have 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom and a hydroxyl group, and halogen atoms, which comprises allowing a cyclohexanedione compound represented by the formula

(2)



to react with an amine compound represented by the formula (3)



(wherein R¹ and R² are as defined above), under a neutral or basic condition.

2-4. (Cancelled).

5. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~any one of claims~~ claim 1, 2 or 4, wherein the aryl group is a phenyl group or a naphthyl group; and the aryloxy group is a phenoxy group or a naphthoxy group; ~~the heterocyclic group is a 5- or 6-membered saturated or unsaturated heterocyclic group; and the heterocyclic group substituted oxy-~~

~~group is an oxy group substituted by a 5 or 6 membered saturated or unsaturated heterocyclic group.~~

6. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the aminophenol compound is 1-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-4-(4-trifluoromethoxyphenoxy) piperidine, 1-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-4-hydroxypiperidine, 1-(4-hydroxyphenyl)piperidine, 1-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-4-methylpiperazine, N-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-N-~~methylaniline~~ methylaniline N-(4-hydroxyphenyl)aniline or N-(4-hydroxyphenyl)dibenzylamine.

7. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, which, is conducted in the presence of a dehydrogenating agent, wherein the dehydrogenating agent is used in an amount of at least 1% by weight based on an amount of the amine compound of the formula (3).

8. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, which is conducted without a dehydrogenating agent.

9. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, which, is conducted under a neutral condition.

10. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, which, is conducted in the presence of a basic compound, wherein the basic compound is used in an amount of 0.5 to 5 mole based on 1 mole of the amine compound of the formula (3).

11. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the reaction is conducted at a reaction temperature of room temperature to 150°C.

12. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the cyclohexanedione compound of the formula (2) is used in an equimolar amount to 10 mole based on 1 mole of the amine compound of the formula (3).